

lations, no restrictions on property holders' rights. All communities interested in this collaborative concept will be able to learn from the success of the program participants by tapping in to a very impressive American Heritage Rivers website.

The reason I'm so pleased by the American Heritage Rivers initiative is that it neatly combines three of the concepts that are closest to my heart, as the Vice President said: First, the notion of environmental stewardship; second, the idea of offering citizen support for a reinvented Government that actually works better and costs less; and finally, once again, that economic prosperity and environmental protection go hand in hand.

We must continue to embrace these three ideas. We must believe in them. We must live by them. The American Heritage Rivers initiative is a great first step. Let the nominations begin.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:52 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Jose Lopez, member, Chicago River Restoration Crew, known in Chicago as River Rats, and August Carlino, executive director, Pittsburgh Rivers of Steel.

### **Executive Order 13061—Federal Support of Community Efforts Along American Heritage Rivers** *September 11, 1997*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190), and in order to protect and restore rivers and their adjacent communities, it is hereby ordered as follows:

#### **Section 1. Policies.**

(a) The American Heritage Rivers initiative has three objectives: natural resource and environmental protection, economic revitalization, and historic and cultural preservation.

(b) Executive agencies ("agencies"), to the extent permitted by law and consistent with their missions and resources, shall coordinate Federal plans, functions, programs, and resources to preserve, protect, and restore riv-

ers and their associated resources important to our history, culture, and natural heritage.

(c) Agencies shall develop plans to bring increased efficiencies to existing and authorized programs with goals that are supportive of protection and restoration of communities along rivers.

(d) In accordance with Executive Order 12630, agencies shall act with due regard for the protection of private property provided for by the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution. No new regulatory authority is created as a result of the American Heritage Rivers initiative. This initiative will not interfere with matters of State, local, and tribal government jurisdiction.

(e) In furtherance of these policies, the President will designate rivers that meet certain criteria as "American Heritage Rivers."

(f) It is the policy of the Federal Government that communities shall nominate rivers as American Heritage Rivers and the Federal role will be solely to support community-based efforts to preserve, protect, and restore these rivers and their communities.

(g) Agencies should, to the extent practicable, help identify resources in the private and nonprofit sectors to aid revitalization efforts.

(h) Agencies are encouraged, to the extent permitted by law, to develop partnerships with State, local, and tribal governments and community and nongovernmental organizations. Agencies will be responsive to the diverse needs of different kinds of communities from the core of our cities to remote rural areas and shall seek to ensure that the role played by the Federal Government is complementary to the plans and work being carried out by State, local, and tribal governments. To the extent possible, Federal resources will be strategically directed to complement resources being spent by these governments.

(i) Agencies shall establish a method for field offices to assess the success of the American Heritage River initiative and provide a means to recommend changes that will improve the delivery and accessibility of Federal services and programs. Agencies are directed, where appropriate, to reduce and make more flexible procedural requirements

and paperwork related to providing assistance to communities along designated rivers.

(j) Agencies shall commit to a policy under which they will seek to ensure that their actions have a positive effect on the natural, historic, economic, and cultural resources of American Heritage River communities. The policy will require agencies to consult with American Heritage River communities early in the planning stages of Federal actions, take into account the communities' goals and objectives and ensure that actions are compatible with the overall character of these communities. Agencies shall seek to ensure that their help for one community does not adversely affect neighboring communities. Additionally, agencies are encouraged to develop formal and informal partnerships to assist communities. Local Federal facilities, to the extent permitted by law and consistent with the agencies' missions and resources, should provide public access, physical space, technical assistance, and other support for American Heritage River communities.

(k) In addition to providing support to designated rivers, agencies will work together to provide information and services to all communities seeking support.

**Sec. 2. Process for Nominating an American Heritage River.**

(a) *Nomination.* Communities, in coordination with their State, local, or tribal governments, can nominate their river, river stretch, or river confluence for designation as an American Heritage River. When several communities are involved in the nomination of the same river, nominations will detail the coordination among the interested communities and the role each will play in the process. Individuals living outside the community may not nominate a river.

(b) *Selection Criteria.* Nominations will be judged based on the following:

(1) the characteristics of the natural, economic, agricultural, scenic, historic, cultural, or recreational resources of the river that render it distinctive or unique;

(2) the effectiveness with which the community has defined its plan of action and the extent to which the plan addresses, either through planned actions or past accomplishments, all three American Heritage Rivers

objectives, which are set forth in section 1(a) of this order;

(3) the strength and diversity of community support for the nomination as evidenced by letters from elected officials; landowners; private citizens; businesses; and especially State, local, and tribal governments. Broad community support is essential to receiving the American Heritage River designation; and

(4) willingness and capability of the community to forge partnerships and agreements to implement their plan to meet their goals and objectives.

**(c) Recommendation Process.**

The Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality ("CEQ") shall develop a fair and objective procedure to obtain the views of a diverse group of experts for the purpose of making recommendations to the President as to which rivers shall be designated. These experts shall reflect a variety of viewpoints, such as those representing natural, cultural, and historic resources; scenic, environmental, and recreation interests; tourism, transportation, and economic development interests; and industries such as agriculture, hydropower, manufacturing, mining, and forest management. The Chair of the CEQ will ensure that the rivers recommended represent a variety of stream sizes, diverse geographical locations, and a wide range of settings from urban to rural and ensure that relatively pristine, successful revitalization efforts are considered as well as degraded rivers in need of restoration.

**(d) Designation.**

(1) The President will designate certain rivers as American Heritage Rivers. Based on the receipt of a sufficient number of qualified nominations, ten rivers will be designated in the first phase of the initiative.

(2) The Interagency Committee provided for in section 3 of this order shall develop a process by which any community that nominates and has its river designated may have this designation terminated at its request.

(3) Upon a determination by the Chair of the CEQ that a community has failed to implement its plan, the Chair may recommend to the President that a designation be revoked. The Chair shall notify the community

at least 30 days prior to making such a recommendation to the President. Based on that recommendation, the President may revoke the designation.

**Sec. 3. Establishment of an Interagency Committee.** There is hereby established the American Heritage Rivers Interagency Committee ("Committee"). The Committee shall have two co-chairs. The Chair of the CEQ shall be a permanent co-chair. The other co-chair will rotate among the heads of the agencies listed below.

(a) The Committee shall be composed of the following members or their designees at the Assistant Secretary level or equivalent:

- (1) The Secretary of Defense;
- (2) The Attorney General;
- (3) The Secretary of the Interior;
- (4) The Secretary of Agriculture;
- (5) The Secretary of Commerce;
- (6) The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development;
- (7) The Secretary of Transportation;
- (8) The Secretary of Energy;
- (9) The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;
- (10) The Chair of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation;
- (11) The Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Arts; and
- (12) The Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Chair of the CEQ may invite to participate in meetings of the Committee, representatives of other agencies, as appropriate.

(b) The Committee shall:

- (1) establish formal guidelines for designation as an American Heritage River;
- (2) periodically review the actions of agencies in support of the American Heritage Rivers;
- (3) report to the President on the progress, accomplishments, and effectiveness of the American Heritage Rivers initiative; and
- (4) perform other duties as directed by the Chair of the CEQ.

**Sec. 4. Responsibilities of the Federal Agencies.** Consistent with Title I of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, agencies shall:

- (a) identify their existing programs and plans that give them the authority to offer assistance to communities involved in river

conservation and community health and revitalization;

- (b) to the extent practicable and permitted by law and regulation, refocus programs, grants, and technical assistance to provide support for communities adjacent to American Heritage Rivers;

(c) identify all technical tools, including those developed for purposes other than river conservation, that can be applied to river protection, restoration, and community revitalization;

(d) provide access to existing scientific data and information to the extent permitted by law and consistent with the agencies mission and resources;

(e) cooperate with State, local, and tribal governments and communities with respect to their activities that take place in, or affect the area around, an American Heritage River;

(f) commit to a policy, as set forth in section 1(j) of this order, in making decisions affecting the quality of an American Heritage River;

(g) select from among all the agencies a single individual called the "River Navigator," for each river that is designated an American Heritage River, with whom the communities can communicate goals and needs and who will facilitate community-agency interchange;

(h) allow public access to the river, for agencies with facilities along American Heritage Rivers, to the extent practicable and consistent with their mission; and

(i) cooperate, as appropriate, with communities on projects that protect or preserve stretches of the river that are on Federal property or adjacent to a Federal facility.

**Sec. 5. Responsibilities of the Committee and the Council on Environmental Quality.**

The CEQ shall serve as Executive agent for the Committee, and the CEQ and the Committee shall ensure the implementation of the policies and purposes of this initiative.

**Sec. 6. Definition.** For the purposes of this order, Executive agency means any agency on the Committee and such other agency as may be designated by the President.

**Sec. 7. Judicial Review.** This order does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by any party

against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
September 11, 1997.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 12, 1997]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on September 15.

**Remarks at a Congressional Reception**

*September 11, 1997*

Thank you very much. Thank you, Al. Thank you, Tipper. Thank you, Marianne, and to Trent and Tricia, and the Speaker was here earlier—to all of you, thank you for coming.

We tried to put speakers up in the other rooms. We can't get everyone in here. Sometimes the best laid plans don't work. I love it when there's a picnic outside, but if we'd done this last night, all of our food would have been destroyed. And then if we'd done it tonight—it's not raining, but right before you came it rained, so all of our food would have been destroyed again. And we thought at least we ought to feed you well. [Laughter]

But there is a long history of this. I actually thought the Vice President was going to tell you the story of the very first time a President had the Congress to the White House. John Adams was the first President to live here. He spent the last 4 or 5 months of his term in the White House. And the first time he invited Congress here, it was a bitter, bitter cold day in Washington. And as you can imagine, back in 1800 we didn't have any central heat. So John and Abigail Adams literally, themselves, as the Congress Members and their families were coming in, were going from room to room, from fireplace to fireplace. They started with 20 cords of wood; they were trying to throw them into the fireplace and get the fire started. You can imagine how it was. And when they finished it—they'd work themselves to death—they looked around; it was so cold all the Mem-

bers of Congress were filing out. So at least you haven't left yet. I feel I'm ahead. [Laughter]

I'd like to say a special word about two groups of people here tonight. First of all, all of you who brought your families, I thank you for doing that. I love seeing the children here. There's one child here I especially like to see, Senator Boxer's grandson, because he's also my nephew, and there he is. I'm glad to see him. I'm glad all the children are here.

The second thing I'd like to do is to say—I haven't got a list here, so I'll get myself in trouble—but I want to mention especially with appreciation, Lee Hamilton, Elizabeth Furse, and every other Member of Congress of either party who is retiring at the end of this session. Thank you for your service to the United States of America, and thank you for being here tonight. We're very grateful to you.

Finally let me say, as Tipper said, Hillary wanted to be here tonight, but she's going to Mother Teresa's funeral, and I think it very important that we send a delegation there. I know there's also a congressional delegation going, and I think that is a very appropriate thing to do.

I hope we'll go on, have a little fun tonight. We'll hear more from the Floating Opera—what a great name. I feel like that's what we are, half the time. [Laughter] Then we're going to go in the room over here and shake hands with anybody that wants to come by. But I stood in the hall for awhile and tried to visit with as many of you as I could—do not feel that you have to. This is not an obligatory receiving line. There is no obligation here tonight except to try to have a good time.

Let's give the band a big hand and listen to them. [Applause]

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:14 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Marianne Gingrich, wife of House Speaker Newt Gingrich, and Tricia Lott, wife of Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. Originally planned as the congressional barbecue, the reception was moved to the East Room due to inclement weather.